

MICHIGAN AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION FUND BOARD

Meeting Location
Michigan Farm Bureau Corporate Office
Lighthouse Room
7373 W. Saginaw Hwy
Lansing, MI 48917

Call in: 517-220-9935
Phone Conference ID: 343 666 583#

Tuesday, February 14, 2023

MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 PM.

Attendance roll call was taken, and a quorum was established.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chairman Bednarski
Member Bourdages
Member DeCock
Member Jarosz (via Teams)
James Johnson (representing Director Angerer)
Member Kohring-Cichon (via Teams)
Member Shine

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

BOARD STAFF PRESENT:

Elizabeth Brost
Forest Kraus

PUBLIC GUESTS PRESENT:

Public attendees present in person and via conference call line.

1:07 PM Approval of Agenda

- Member Kohring-Cichon motioned to approve the agenda.
 - Motion seconded.
 - Vote occurred. All in favor/0 opposed
 - Motion carried.

1:08 PM Approval of December 5, 2022 Meeting Minutes

- Member Shine motioned to approve the December 2, 2022 Meeting Minutes as proposed. Member DeCock asked to include “for discussion” under Grants: Farm Substitutions section.
 - Motion seconded.
 - Vote occurred. All in favor/0 opposed
 - Motion carried.

1:10 PM FY23 Grant Applications

Elizabeth presented the FY23 Grants scoring and ranking and discussed the various reasons that some of the qualified local programs didn't apply this year.

- Member Kohring motioned to approve all four applications for funding.
 - Motion seconded.
 - Vote occurred. All in favor/0 opposed
 - Motion carried.

1:30 PM Macomb County PDR Application Question (Jim Fuerstenau)

Jim Fuerstenau discussed an application for Macomb County PDR Program that he is working on with a landowner. He wondered if the Board had any concerns if the application submitted was under 13 tax bills. The Board didn't have any objections to submitting the application because the conservation easement area can be composed of multiple tax bills and the easement area legal description is considered whole and can't be divided unless specific language in the easement allows for divisions.

1:45 PM Review re-written policy document (from December meeting)

Elizabeth read the re-written parcel substitution language that was tabled in December's meeting for the Board's approval:

"If a landowner backs out after the Grant Agreement is signed, MDARD staff will offer the next unfunded parcel on the ranking list, within the same fiscal year, an opportunity to accept a grant. The grant amount cannot exceed the amount of the grant returned unless there are leftover funds for the given fiscal year. If there are no unfunded parcels within the fiscal year ranking list or all unfunded parcels do not accept the grant offer and the local entity returning the grant has a parcel substitution that is comparable in size and quality, the local entity can request a substitution by filling out an amended application to MDARD. If the amended application points are comparable to the original parcel points, then approval will be given. If the points are not comparable, then the returned grant will not be substituted. MDARD will notify the MAPFB of the outcome."

Discussion on the re-written parcel substitution language occurred.

- Member Shine motioned to adopt the proposed parcel substitution policy language.
 - Motion seconded.
 - Vote occurred. 5 in favor/1 opposed
 - Motion carried.

2:00 PM Other

Elizabeth discussed Kent County's FY22 Grant for the Momber Farm. The landowner backed out and Kent County is requesting a substitution parcel. Due to the newly adopted parcel substitution language, Elizabeth will review under the terms of the new policy.

Elizabeth discussed Barry County's FY22 Grant for the Wing Farm. The appraisal came in significantly higher than anticipated. The landowners would like to request a 12-acre reduction to exclude the residence and farm buildings, but to keep the grant amount the same.

Discussion occurred regarding the appraisal and reasoning of why the buildings weren't originally excluded. Elizabeth explained that Barry County lost their land consultant and had to work on the application themselves.

- Member Bourdages motioned to approve removing the residence and farm buildings and to keep the grant amount the same.
 - Motion seconded.

- Vote occurred. All in favor/0 opposed
- Motion carried.

2:07 PM Public Comment

A member of the public discussed a previous unfunded application that was also submitted to ACEP-ALE that was recently approved for funding. They discussed how the ACEP-ALE Program was tough to go through. They also mentioned that MAEAP was a breeze to work through, but that the program needed better follow-up.

Another member of the public discussed the Wing Farm application and thanked the Board for their work.

Another member of the public associated with the Southwest Michigan Conservation District introduced themselves and discussed promoting the Local Grants Program and work that American Farmland Trust is doing in their community.

2:17 PM Next Meeting Date and Adjournment

Staff will send a Doodle Poll to Board members to schedule the next meeting for August or September.

- Member DeCock motioned to adjourn meeting.
 - Motion seconded. All in favor/0 opposed
 - Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:17 PM.